TRIBUTARY

WATER EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER — SUMMER 2004

Water Use Workshops

By Molly Waters, Water Conservation Coordinator, DWRe

The Division of Water Resources, along with several other supporting agencies, are sponsoring a series of water use workshops this summer for large landscape water users. This is the third year of the program, and we continue to see wonderful success at sites whose staff has attended.

Maintaining a large landscape area during the heat of the summer can be a challenge. It the goal of these workshops to aid property managers and maintenance staff of large institutions, government agencies, commercial businesses and homeowners associations in troubleshooting maintenance and inefficiencies in their irrigation systems.

Each workshop covers topics vital to maintaining large landscapes, including the following:

I. ***Introduction and Demonstration Water Check:***
An introduction to basic landscape irrigation principles and observation of landscape water checking techniques.

II. ***Weather:***
How sunlight, humidity, wind and temperature influence water loss through plants and from the soil surface.

III. ***Plants:***
Basic principles of plant management that will maintain plant health and beauty while minimizing water use.

IV. ***Soils:***
Understanding the relationships among soils, irrigation water and plants.

V. ***Irrigation:***
Routine maintenance practices that will keep a system operating at peak efficiency and uniformity as well as irrigation scheduling practices.

VI. ***Field Exercises:***
Practicing landscape water checking techniques and calculations.

Cost is only $10 per person, and includes class workbook, a set of catch cups, a soil probe and – best of all – ***free lunch***!

Please call Lori Johnson at **435-797-2255** one (1) week in advance to register. Space is limited. Be sure to dress appropriately for outdoor field exercises.

DWRe Intern Surveys State Parks

By Molly Waters, Water Conservation Coordinator, DWRe

This summer is bringing about many exciting programs for DWRe, one of which is a State Parks Water Survey Program. For these purposes, DWRe has hired Susan Robison to work as an intern on this project.

After working at the Utah Research Water Laboratory for three years, Su wanted to further her education and career in water conservation. She was a perfect match for the Professional Studies of Horticulture emphasizing Water-Efficient Landscaping Master's program through the Department of Plants, Soils, and Biometeorology at Utah State University. The program is a one-year program consisting of course work and a project based on an internship.

For her internship, DWRe has hired her to design and implement a landscape water audit program for

Utah State Parks. The audit includes a walk through the park site examining each irrigation zone and catch-cup tests on representative zones. The State Park will receive a report recommending changes to their watering schedule, irrigation systems, and landscapes. This program may assist in generating funds for the State Parks to improve their irrigation systems, while decreasing their current water use.

It is always important for any water-related agency to make sure their own house is in order while they are recommending citizens conserve water. We feel this program will be a great addition to the many conservation programs already in place at the state.

Lawn Care Tips for a Hot Utah Summer

By Molly Waters, Water Conservation Coordinator, DWRe

With no relief in site, this summer is shaping up to be another hot one. While many lawns are starting to look thirsty more and more frequently, there are some simple things you can do to reduce the water demand of your lawn.

Mowing

Is your lawn shorter than your carpet? Mowing your lawn at such a short length hurts the grass, wastes water and produces more green waste.

By raising your lawn mower height anywhere from 2 to 4 inches, you are promoting the conservation of water in grass. Grass will shade itself as it grows longer and promotes deeper rooting, reducing its overall water need. Experts recommend removing no more than one-third of the leaf blade per mowing.

Stressing

Ever heard the expression "What doesn't kill you only makes you stronger"? In order to make your grass heartier, try stressing it out! By going an extra day without water here and there, you are promoting deeper root growth. The deeper the roots are allowed to penetrate the soil, the better overall health of your lawn. Roots will only grow as far as they need to in order to get water. If you are always giving them water up near the surface of the lawn, the plants have no incentive to grow deeper. You can easily check your rooting depth by using a soil probe or screwdriver.

Don't over water to make up for a few brown spots. Fix the inefficiencies in your sprinkler system, water the spots by hand, or learn to live with a few brown spots. You can even wear your brown spots as a badge of honor to show you are conserving water!

Fertilization

Fertilizing your lawn encourages healthy plant growth. In this case, however, MORE IS NOT BETTER! Fertilize sparingly, as you can actually over stimulate plant growth, making the lawn more susceptible to dry conditions and disease. Additionally, the more fertilizer applied to a lawn increases the likelihood of harmful chemicals running off into streams or seeping into groundwater. The combination of over-watering and over-fertilizing can be dangerous to plants and humans!

Calendar of Events

Please visit our Events Calendar located at www.conservewater.utah.gov/calendar.

July 10, 2004

Garden Fair at the Demonstration Garden

Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District is proud to sponsor three new garden fairs for the summer of 2004. We will be providing demonstrations on landscaping ideas to reduce your water consumption along with experts to answer your questions. Larry Sagers of the KSL Greenhouse Show will be broadcasting live at each Garden Fair. Joy in the Garden from 570 KNRS will also attend each fair. This garden fair will focus on homeowner irrigation issues.

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